

Another example of mimicry of a noise (not a bird's call) was a song of the Brown Thornbill's by the creek which began birdlike with "swt-twitty-tee-twt-chee" but always ended with a frog's croak.

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Can a Magpie Count?**—I have not personally witnessed the incident about to be related but several neighbours have seen it on a neighbouring block. Two wood-fellers pitched their tents near where a Western Magpie had her nest and grew quite friendly with the birds, giving them all the scraps left over at meal times. Later on the young ones came out in the nest and on the old bird being fed with a certain number of pieces of bacon she would eat all of them until there were three left. These she carried to the young ones in the nest. The men varied the number of pieces and the last three pieces were always carried to the three young in the nest.

—R. J. MORRISON, West Pingelly.

**Wing-span of Wedge-tailed Eagle.**—In the *Handbook of the Birds of Western Australia*, 1948, Serventy and Whittell give the average wing-span of the Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Uroaetus audax*) as between 6 ft. 3 in. and 7 ft. 3 in., stating that the record is held by a Victorian bird with a wing-span of 10 ft. As authentic records of this nature appear to be few it may be of interest to report that some years ago on the Chapman River near its confluence with the Blackwood River, I measured a large eagle with the wing-span of 8 ft. 3 in. This measurement was made with a steel tape between the furthestmost points of the extended wings. This is the largest I have actually measured but unfortunately the sex was not determined.

—D. H. PERRY, Forests Department, Perth.

**A Leg-less Silver Gull.**—On December 28, 1949 I was fishing at Safety Bay. In the afternoon, when out near Bird Island, there was quite a flock of Silver Gulls (*Larus novae-hollandiae*) around the boat. They gradually settled down on the water except for one bird which kept on circling. This drew my attention to it and when it came near the boat I was astonished to find that it had *no legs*. One-legged Silver Gulls are no rarity but this is the first time that I have seen or heard of a leg-less Gull. Its wings were somewhat frayed at the "wrist" or carpal bend as if it had been pushing itself along with its wings. Strangely enough, despite its condition, it seemed healthy enough.

I am quite certain of its leg-less state, as it flew only a few feet above my head and there was no sign of either leg.

—DON REID, Wembley.